$2.00

THE JACG NEWSLETTER

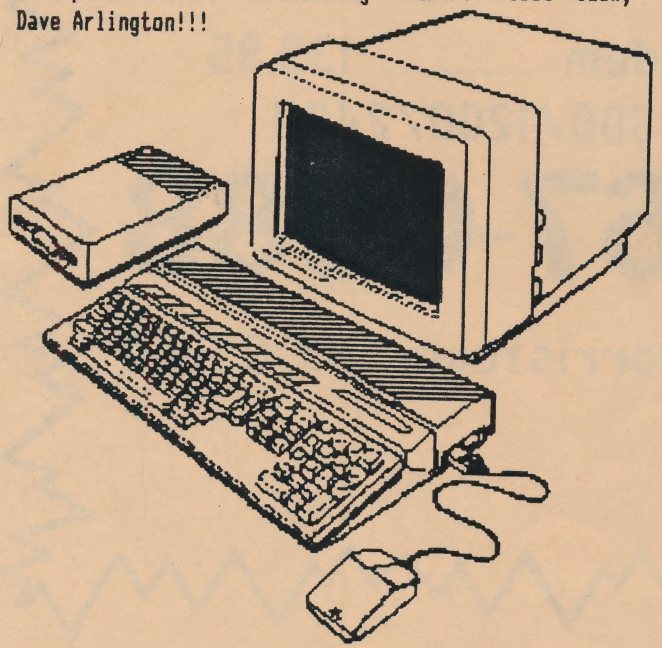
THE JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 4 BBS : 201-298-0161 JUNE 1989

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This month (June), is the JACG's annual ATARI SAFARI. Both 8 and 16-bit offerings will be available. Demonstrations of inventory programs (8/16-bit), computer simulated radio controlled model airplane (16-bit), computer controlled model railroad (8-bit), disk drive modification (XF-551 [8-bit]), midi (16-bit), and perhaps one or two others...will take place. Hopefully they will illustrate the continued utility and viability of ATARI 8 and 16-bit computers. Perhaps some nice soul will write an article on the SAFARI, once it's history...hint, hint!

Dave Arlington will work with me on the next issue or two of the JACG Newsletter, after which he has graciously offered to take over the helm of this august publication...by that time I will have editorialized for three years...I will continue to contribute copy, and of course, remain as both 8-bit vice president and advertising seeker. Good luck, Dave Arlington!!!



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEXT MEETING

JULY 8, 1989

Spring Madness for ST Owners !!!

Atari 520STfm .....$ 499.95
512K Ram with built-in DS/DD
drive and Mouse

Atari SF314 Disk Drive 169.95
720K DS/DD External Drive

Atari SH305 30MB Hard Drive 499.95
Built-in Clock/Calendar, extra DMA
Port and Boot Sector program

Supra 2400 Baud Modem 139.95
Hayes Compatible 300/1200/2400

GEMINI 267-0988

171 Ridgedale Avenue, Morristown, NJ 07960

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Gary Gorski

GARY GORSKI PROMISES TO WRITE AN EXTRA LONG "PRESIDENT'S REPORT NEXT MONTH...TO OFFSET THE LACK OF ONE THE PAST TWO MONTHS!!!

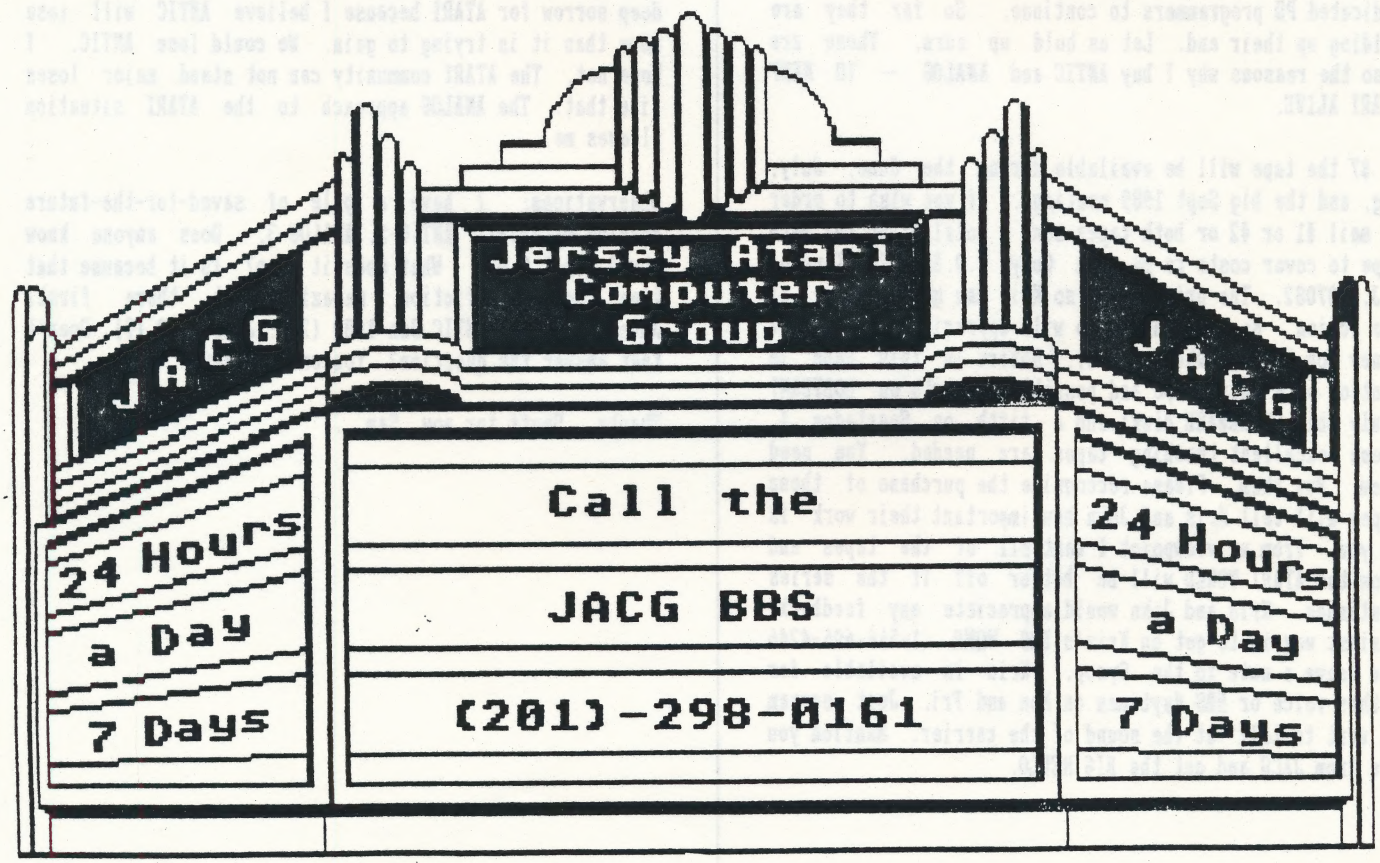
Editor's note...Gary didn't think that I'd mention his missing report...heh, heh, heh!

NOISE FROM NOYES

by Dave Noyes

On pages 11 and 12 of this issue, you will find both information on, and an application form for, "LEARNING LINK", the BBS and Database for the New Jersey Network (non-profit, public broadcasting TV network). The $44.00 yearly fee gives one not only all programming information...but also the ability to utilize and access educational data, public and private messaging, and a myriad of services...topped off by access (within New Jersey only) via a toll-free "800" number. Kudos to Sam Cory for bringing this to our attention!

I just finished adding a "Happy" controller to my "Happy" equipped 1050 drive, and encountered a new "Murphy's" law. If a wire MUST be at least a certain length to allow a connector to connect, one can be assured that the wire will be 1/64th inches too short! I think that I am the first person to start with a connecter, wired with 26 guage wire, and by deft exertion, produced a connector with 50 guage wire...a new technique known as extrusion within the insulation!!!
...'til next month!!!



June Library Notes

TAPE #2 ON SPARTADOS

by KRIS HOLTEGAARD

S. Cory - JACG

This Hour 30min tape focuses on Subdirectories and Bat files. Woven into the discourse are: MENU.COM, SUPERARC, MIO SWAPS, Moving between DIRECTORIES, ERASE, UNERASE, DELETE, DTERM, DOWNLOADING, and Setup and use of the RAMDISK.

NOTICE!! I am arbitrarily making a decision for the good of all of us who buy through the club any form of SHAREWARE. An additional $1 will be added to the price of such a disk. This money will be sent to the Owner to make him know the club appreciates their work and want more. So far we of JACG have been feeding freely upon these people without any real reccognition. DUMB!! That has to stop if we expect to find more programs available in the Public Domain. No one likes to work for long for free. I for one can not program even in BASIC. These programmers deserve and receive my admiration. If you go on the BBS's and see how ATARI is getting less play, or try to buy some of the outstanding programs available for other computers you know we are suffering for the mistakes and obvious ignoring by the Trammiels. Our main hope is for these dedicated PD programmers to continue. So far they are holding up their end. Let us hold up ours. These are also the reasons why I buy ANTIC and ANALOG -- TO KEEP ATARI ALIVE.

At $7 the tape will be available during the June, July, Aug, and the big Sept 1989 meetings. If you wish to order by mail #1 or #2 or both tapes send a total of $8 for each tape to cover costs to me, Sam Cory P.O.Box 7, Towaco, N.J. 07082. The price is $7 so Kris can get a piece of the action. He and John Aalto will appreciate any extra money you donate (who doesn't). Notice in this tape is mention of a third tape and possibly a fourth on BOBTERM? (July 8bit SHAREWARE disk) and a fifth on Spartados X. These excellent teaching tapes are needed. You need them. Buy them. Please reccognize the purchase of these tapes will tell Kris and John how important their work is to you. From my viewpoint I want all of the tapes and know the ATARI WORLD will be better off if the series continues. Kris and John would appreciate any feedback. Easiest way is to get on Kris's BBS WQNR 1-516-696-4246 and leave a note to the Sysop. Kris is available for either voice or BBS daytimes on Mon and Fri. Just scream "I want to talk" at the sound of the carrier. Mention you are from JACG and get the BIG HELLO.

JACG#139. One of our members exchanged this disk at the May meeting. If what I now know is true he is no better off. The disk runs fine on an 800XL. It will not run on an 800XL with the translator disk installed. This should mean it will not work with the 800 or 400 operating system. Obviously, it was not tried or written for the 800. Now if Paul Tupaczewski, the author, were still available maybe some correction could be made. Paul is a genius leaving ATARI to go to college. Good luck Paul. I take blame for not having time to fully test and setup disks for everyone. It is easy to miss a printer, an OS or some quirk. A choice was made between quantity and complete quality. Results and demand indicate quantity is wanted. Please help me and your fellow members. If there is a problem with any disk tell me. Or do as this person and indicate on the disk envelope what you found wrong. I will never know about disk problems without your help.

--REAL BAD NEWS---LOOK AT THE NEW ANTIC. There is no editorial. Read the flier. Read it well. You now have to make a choice. Pay for the magazine AND disk or NO magazine. This represents a desparate move, I am sure. For myself freedom of choice has always been very important. I am ?lucky? Just paid for one year of ANTIC witout disk. As Disk Librarian I do not have time to use the programs. Just like to read it and support ATARI. They do give the option to continue present subscriptions as magazine only. This I will write in and tell them to do. Make sure you make your desires known. They will be alerted by your responses. It leaves a sour taste and a deep sorrow for ATARI because I believe ANTIC will lose more than it is trying to gain. We could lose ANTIC. I hope not. The ATARI community can not stand major loses like that. The ANALOG approach to the ATARI situation pleases me.

Observations: I have a pile of saved-for-the-future reading material. ANTIC-5, ANALOG-3. Does anyone know why A.N.A.L.O.G.? What does it mean? Is it because that fine science fiction magazine got there first? Advertisements: ANTIC Jan 1989 (21); July 1989 (7) Doen't that answer the question? You count ANALOG.

Thanks. Snuff for now. Sam...

ALGORITHMS

Don MacLeay - JACG

I'm fascinated by the different programing languages, but in keeping up with the changing fashion of procedural languages, BASIC, Forth, C, and now QUICKBASIC again, I missed the point of programming in the first place. In getting caught up in the syntax of each language I forgot about learning to solve prob- lems. Algorithms are special methods for solving certain situa- tions in computer programming. You can implement them in any language and it even has a loose syntax of its own syntax called pseudo-code to mimic procedural program code. A programmer uses algorithms in pseudo-code to outline his program before "hard coding" and to "look at the forest" before fighting the "trees".

ANIMATION

Books on programming tell you the algorithm of screen anima- tion is to draw an image, erase it and then draw it in a new location. Let's take a look at the algorithm in psuedo-code using variables in capital letters:

```
draw at POSITION in background color
draw at POSITION in foreground color
change POSITION
```

Do you see the mistake? If you code this you get a colorful smear across your screen because POSITION is changed before the previous image is erased. The correct order solves the problem:

```
draw at POSITION in background color
change POSITION
draw at POSITION in foreground color
```

Let's look at it thinking in terms of user coded subrou- tines, or subprograms:

```
call DRAW(POSITION, background color)
change POSITION
call DRAW(POSITION, foreground color)
```

You can eliminate one of the subroutine calls by adding an extra variable. It also eliminates the possible wide separation in your final code between the two draw statements:

```
change NEWPOSITION
call DRAWOBJECT
DRAWOBJECT:
    draw OLDPOSITION in background color
    draw NEWPOSITION in foreground color
    OLDPOSITION = NEWPOSITION
```

As you make it a habit to collect algorithms and pseudo-code your ideas you'll discover as I did that which language you use counts less than knowing the "trick" to making it work. (END)

1200XL

By Joseph E. Hicswa - JACG

John Dean's Survey for ANALOG & ST-LOG (April, 1989 JACG news) up- lifted me. It indicated that 5% of polled JACG members own a 1200XL--I was not alone.

I bought my first ATARI a 1200XL at a JACG meeting flea market. It was an unhappy beginning. I had no manual or ATARI books.

BASIC was familiar--learned on a Timex/Sinclair 1500 but ATARI BASIC was something else. I struggled to learn ATARI BASIC and key board all without instructions.

As a new member of JACG I groped hungrily for information to learn, use and enjoy my 1200XL. Frankly I did not know what questions to ask or whom to ask. Then I discovered JACG's Newsletter Library and got a few volumes.

The 1200XL reviews dismayed me: Authors disparagingly bemoaned the "1200XL did not meet their expec- tations." I felt sad. Writers who know ATARI computers had no respect for the 1200XL--the model I bought

While shopping for a replacement I bought books to learn ATARI BASIC but was painfullu getting nowhere. Each book had only a smattering of what I needed.

At JACG meetings the 130XE raves and demos were impressive. I bought one. It was booting up for a check then put back in the carton until I would become adept with ATARI BASIC on the 1200XL--over two years ago.

My appreciation of 1200XL grows steadily: Its full potential has yet to be utilized.

Every boot-up continually amazes me with marvels displayed on screen or printer when I press the keys.

Commercial & Public Domain soft- ware will engross me all my life.

The 1200XL amuses me with games; records all household, personal and financial expenses in proper order; then with printer and a First Xlent word processor program, it formats my letters, reports and articles.

My 1200XL is a teaching machine.. Available programs educate me from pre-school through college graduate with diplomas. I'm neither debased nor punished for my mistakes. 1200 allows me to correct and proceed at my own speed.

In the realm of programming, the 1200XL makes me elated as ideas become reality thru keyboard, screen and printer.

This obedient servant explicitly obeys all ROM-language instructions but sometimes mis-instruction sends it pouting somewhere in ROM.

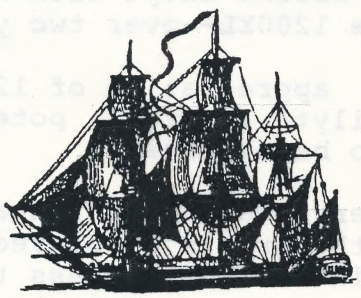
Should I run into a problem, it doesn't say, "Do it this way.", or "Do that." or "Don't you know what you're doing?". No sir, my 1200XL just quietly and patiently lets me think my way through.

Although frustrating, there is a feeling of acomplishment when problem is solved and program works!

As I learn colors, graphics and sound, my mind will really blow.

I don't know what early writers expected from 1200 but mine opened a new, expanding world for me.

Don't Give Up the Ship!



Write an Article for the JACG.

GFA BASIC
Class 1

BASIC

What is it? BASIC stands for Beginners All purpose Symbolic Instruction Code. BASIC consists of commands (specific words) that when entered through a BASIC interpreter form a 'Statement'. A statement is simply an instruction to the computer to perform a specific task. All computers understand only 1 language directly, called machine language. Machine language consists of series of numbers (1's and 0's). Assembly language is sometimes referred to as machine language. Any programming language other than Assembly or machine language is known as an interpreted language, in other words, the computer translates the commands you enter into machine language which it can understand. This translation is what sometimes causes other languages to be slower than Assembly language. Why learn another language then? Why not learn Assembly and save the time of this translation? Simple, Assembly or machine language is ryptic! The commands are not easily understood and every different computer chip uses a different set of instructions. Assembly is by far the fastest and most efficient language, also the hardest to learn (in my opinion anyway). BASIC on any computer uses an interpreter for you to enter your code. The interpreter then translates those commands into machine language. The relative ease of learning and using BASIC is why we're here. Lets proceed...

Through the course of this instruction the only thing that's required is GFA Basic itself. After you learn to write your own programs you may want to consider purchasing the GFA Compiler. It allows you to convert your basic programs into regular .PRG files that you can run from the desktop without having to load GFA Basic first. Also, the GFA Companion is helpful in constructing GEM menus, alert boxes, text boxes and 'pop-up' menus. The companion also includes a very good disk tutorial for GFA beginners. Items I strongly urge you to get immediately are:

DIOX95.ARC - A shareware program that constructs dialog boxes for you and actually writes the GFA source code to merge into your own programs.

GFATIPS.ARC - A series of GFA tutorials with example programs included written by John Holder (author of GFA Companion)

Misc GFA programs - you can print them out and use them to study other programmers techniques.

The 3 items mentioned above are available on the STarBase BBS (904- 581-2866, 1200/2400 baud, 24 hours daily) if you have a modem or from the STar library if you

contact Hobart Neighbors. All the files include documentation which I suggest you print out as much as possible as it makes a good source for future reference. Several of the ST magazines have ongoing articles pertaining to GFA Basic, some very good. Other suggested reading sources are:

GFA Basic Training - Reboot Camp - An excellent tutorial written specifically for the GFA novice. This will teach you a lot of the basics if you're a true beginning programmer.

GFA Basic Book - Written by the author of GFA Basic himself. This book is for intermediate to advanced level programmers. A lot of good info here although it gets quite complex at times. Save this for when you've truly mastered the main commands and functions of the language.

GFA Basic Quick Reference Guide by Abacus - Another reference type of book that includes additional examples of some of the commands. Very similar to the GFA book that comes with the language.

On to the good stuff...

(###NOTE### the familiarization with the editor and keyboard commands referenced here were covered in our User Group lessons, if you're reading this from the tutorial, please study your GFA Owners Manual and learn to use the editor, it works!)

Initially we'll cover familiarization with the editor in GFA. You'll learn how to use both the mouse and the keyboard to perform all the needed functions. We'll then progress to some of the most basic commands (and the most frequently used commands) to thoroughly familiarize you with them. Three different filename extensions will be used, .BAS (or .GFA),.BAK and .LST. The .BAS extender indicates that the program is a basic program that requires the GFA Basic interpreter (or the Run Only version) to run the program. Almost all the Basic interpreters use the .BAS extension so to identify the GFA only programs, some programmers began using .GFA as an extension to differentiate between the different interpreters. You CAN modify your GFA Basic program to list and load programs with a .GFA extension instead of the .BAS extension however, this should be left to those with some experience modifying programs in this fashion. The second time you save a file, GFA automatically renames any previous version of your program to .BAK to provide you with a backup. The .LST extension indicates a GFA program saved in ASCII format. To load these type of programs, you need to use the Merge feature within the interpreter. The advantage to saving your files in ASCII format is that they can be viewed/printed from the desktop. The disadvantage is that they take longer to save/load. Subroutines that you intend to use in different programs should be saved in this format as they can then be merged into any of your programs.

One thing to remember when using GFA is that you may only enter 1 command per line. This tends to make your listings (programs) a little longer but this is also where GFA gains a lot of its speed. The interpreter will check each line you enter after you press <RETURN>. If there's an error, it will tell you. You may enter your commands in either upper or lowercase letters and GFA will automatically correct them for you. For ease of illustration, I'll show all GFA commands in uppercase letters.

Some of the commands we'll learn to use during this first lesson will include:

PRINT (or ?) - simply tells the computer to print a statement on the screen. EXAMPLE: PRINT "Hello there!" - notice the text we want printed is enclosed in quotation marks. The computer will print anything between the quotation marks up to a maximum of 255 characters. Instead of typing PRINT you may use the question mark and GFA will change it for you to PRINT. This is simply a shortcut. EXAMPLE: ? "Hello there!" - notice you still need the quote marks.

PRINT AT(X,Y) - tells GFA to print a statement at a specific location with 'X' being the column and 'Y' being the row. EXAMPLE: PRINT AT(10,10);"Hello there!" - the quotes are still there and the only difference is this statement will print Hello there! beginning at the 10th column and the 10th row.

REM (or ' or !) - tells GFA to ignore the statement that follows as it is only a comment for your use. Uses would be to insert comments in your program such as REM This changes colors. If you ever need to find where you change the colors in your program, it's easier to look for the comment you left yourself explaining what you did. REM or ' may be used at the beginning of a line only and indicates that GFA should ignore the entire line. The ' symbol is a shortcut. When you want to enter a comment on the same line as your statement, use the ! character. The ! tells GFA that the text following it is simply a comment for your use. EXAMPLE (EX1):

REM Program to print Hello there! (GFA ignores this) ' By Tom Hayslett (GFA ignores this line also) PRINT "Hello there!" !Actual program

PAUSE X - Tells GFA to wait a specified period of time before continuing. 'X' can be any whole number. 50=1 second so if your command is PAUSE 100, you're telling GFA to wait 2 seconds and then continue. EXAMPLE (EX2):

REM Program to pause PAUSE 50 !Waits 1 second PAUSE 300

!Waits 6 seconds

CLS - Tells GFA to clear the screen. This will help keep your program looking more professional and it's very fast. It doesn't need anything else used with it to work. EXAMPLE: CLS

KEY=INP(2) - This statement tells GFA to wait for the user to press any key. This can be very useful when you want to display information to whomever is using your program and you want your program to continue after they've read the information and pressed any key. EXAMPLE: KEY=INP(2) The 2 in parentheses indicates we're waiting for any input from the keyboard. GFA uses this command to wait for input from other sources also but we'll save them for another lesson.

EDIT - Tells GFA to return you to the editor. Again, no additional commands are needed. Now, lets use what we've learned to write a short and simple program. See if you can follow exactly what we're doing in the following program (EX3).

```
REM Our first program in GFA PRINT AT(35,11);"Hello
there!"   !Prints at column 35, row 11 PRINT
AT(30,22);"Press any key to continue..." KEY=INP(2)
!Wait for a key to be pressed CLS  !Clears the screen
PRINT AT(35,11);"Thank you!" PAUSE 250  !Pauses for 5
seconds CLS PRINT "Returning to the editor..." PAUSE 150
EDIT  !Returns us to the GFA editor
```

That's it for the introduction and some of the simpler yet most commonly used commands. Hopefully I'll be able to keep writing these files to help you beginners progress. Don't forget though that after you do become somewhat proficient at the language yourself, I expect to learn some tricks from you!

Tom Hayslett
STar Users Group

C'mon! Don't be Shy. Write an Article for the JACG Newsletter!

MAY 1989 ST DEMO'S

John H. Dean, JACG ST V.P.

Two excellent demonstrations were presented at the regular May Meeting of the JACG, one by **Mike Hochman**, the other by **Charlie Miller**. To those of you who missed the meeting, here is a quick review of both.

Mike showed us how he keeps the JACG membership records up to date using Timeworks Data Manager ST. He explained that Data Manager ST is fully flexible Data Base system, although not in the class called 'relational'. He demonstrated the GEM interfacing that places all program commands directly onto the computer display. He even showed us how "private" information could be hidden from view..

Data Manager ST provides quick access, and allows items to be easily retrieved and printed by name, date range, which alerts him to expiring memberships, for instance, and any other category of information stored in the system. Data Manager has cross-search and an advanced, indexed sort system.

While not demonstrated by **Mike**, Data Manager ST also has full Math capability, and lets you display and print out numerical information in a variety of graphics formats, including pie charts, vertical bar charts, scatter diagrams, line graphs, hi-low-stock charts, and more.

Thank you **Mike**, for your splendid demonstration! I was so impressed that I hurried over to Gemini to get a copy for myself.

Charlie Miller showed off his hardware/software combination called "R/C AeroChopper. This lets allows you to control an on-screen plane in the same manner you would fly a real R/C plane. You know what R/C is, don't you. R/C stands for Radio Control, and I'm sure you have at some time or another passed an open field and seen model airplanes up above circling

around a guy, or gal, on the ground holding a 'black box'. Well, Charlie had his black box, complete with analog controllers, and made a demonstration flight with a helicopter simulation.

The package includes seven different aircraft (including the helicopter), with 22 sets of flying parameters. The aircraft and flying conditions can be modified to suit the user. Charlie's demonstration was really realistic - maybe even too much so - because after he flew the helicopter into the ground and it exploded into separate parts, he just couldn't seem to get it up in the air again. The 'demo' included with software did it's part however, and we all got a really good look at a zooming, banking, flying machine.

Thank you too, **Charlie.**

ST LIBRARY

JUNE DISK(S) OF THE MONTH
John H. Dean, ST V.P.

Our first D.O.M. for June is **JACG_LIB.143.** and contains:

***SUPRBT55:** By Gordon Moore. Superboot 4.1 is on Library Disk #116, but has been substantially updated to Version 5.5 which is given here. Super Boot is an "all-in-one" type boot program that does just about everything you could ever want. This new version is now much more compatible with all hardware configuration, it has become "smarter", and several annoying bugs have been corrected. Superboot is SHAREWARE. If you use it, pay your share of its cost of development.

***HEADSTART10:** By Charles F. Johnson and John Eidsvoog. Head Start 1.0 is a complete rewrite of the popular/infamous public domain program, STARTGEM. Its' purpose is to allow you easily to auto-boot any type of GEM program from your AUTO folder. Head Start will wait until all desk accessories are loaded and the desktop is fully initialized before running the auto-boot program.

***DCOPY312:** By Larry Novak. DCOPY191, written by Ralph Walden, is in our Library on disks #66 & 82. Larry has fixed numerous bugs in this archive program, and added many new useful features. The copy disk functions have been completely rewritten, and now will copy any format disk (non copy protected). Dcopy reads the information on the source disk and will format the destination disk accordingly. The **DCOPYSHL.PRG** included in this folder is written as Shareware by Keith Gerdes. This is a **"simple" GEM menu-based program** that takes care of input for Dcopy 3.xx with less than 10K of memory. Try it! You'll like it!

***DCFORMAT3:** By Double Click Software is distributed as SHAREWARE. This program is new to our Library, and will be a welcome addition. DC Formatter works in any resolution, and will let you format disks with 40, 42, 80, or 82 tracks, and up to 10 sectors per track. They may be either normal, or skewed. It will let you format a boot sector only, format for Magic Sac, Spectre 128, IBM, and it will let adjust the seek rate to 2, 3 or 6. It makes multiple copies of disks by reading them into memory, and then writing to as many copies as desired. This is particularly useful for Disk Librarians.

WHATIS: By Bill Aycock. This is a simple utility that will identify 23 different types of files. It is mouse-driven and works in any resolution. It reads the first few bytes of the file in question, and if these bytes match a known file "signature", WHATIS will tell you what type of file it is. It can recognize such files as ARCed files, executable ST programs. ST-Writer files. Spectrum pics, Degas pics, GIF pics, etc. It also recognizes various types of compressed 8-bit files.

NOTE: This disk is single sided, but with an extended format so that we could include all these goodies.

Our second D.O.M. for June is **JACG_LIB.144.** and is in response to a request from some of our members for a GFA BASIC tutorial. You will find elsewhere in this issue the first installment of the text written by Tom Hayslett of eight classes he gave for his group in Mary Esther , Florida. These are all on this disk, and we are sure you will find them very informative.

PUBLISHING PRO SAMPLE PAGE

Publishing Pro
Reviewed by: Neil Van Oost Jr.

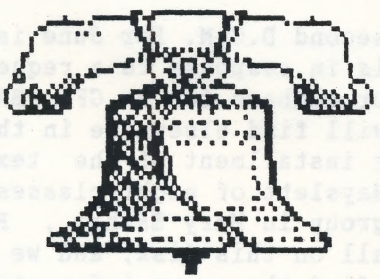
Publishing Pro, written by Alan Reeve, of REEVE Software, 29W150 Old Farm Lane, Warrenville, Il 60555, phone: 312-393-2317. Written for Atari 800/XL/XE systems. List price $39.95.

The program came packaged in a plastic folder, which opened to reveal one single sided disk and four xeroxed sheets of documentation. The disk is copy protected, but can be backed up if you are a Happy owner. For those of you who do not own a Happy, a back up copy may be purchased for a reasonable $5.00. If you damage your disk outside of the 30 day warranty period you can get it replaced for a minimal charge of $2.00.

Quoting from the cover of the package, "Publishing Pro brings the power of Desktop Publishing to your Atari 800/XL/XE computer. Publishing Pros' object oriented environment will allow you to manipulate headers, columns, and icons with ease." Among the Column Editor features are, adjustable column sizes, alternate fonts, use of ASCII files. Among the Header Editor features are, alternate fonts, four sizes of text and automatic centering.

Publishing Pro is "PrintShop" compatible. You have the ability to do a full page layout and the program is also compatible with "News Station". The printers that the program supports are: Star SG-10/NX-10, Panasonic 1080/1090 series, Citizen 120-D, ProWriter, Atari XMM801 and other Epson/ProWriter compatibles.

The program boots up with BASIC enabled and displays the Main Menu of five choices. They are: 1) Create Headers, 2) Create Columns, 3) Create Icons, 4) Create Pages, and 5) The Press. I will not give a blow by blow trip through the instructions, but will instead attempt to create a page containing this review. Then, you the reader, can see the results of my first trip through "Publishing Pro".



Creating a balanced page takes a lot of time and one heck of a lot of patience. You should be prepared to spend a lot of time reworking your page to get it right. Planing your page in advance will help a lot.

THE WAY IT WAS?

There are several things that make this program difficult to use, for one thing the documentation leaves a lot to be desired. Very, very, much I would have liked a sample page using all the features of the program. It would have been nice to know just what the different sizes of text, icons and headers looked like. Also a printout of the different fonts would have been helpful.

When saving your text in ASCII form from your word processor, the documentation neglects to mention that you have to print it to the disk. You should check and see if your word processor can do this. I found that Text Wiz, Speed Script, or Text Pro work fine.

I had some trouble when using the Icon function on my 130XE. I don't know if its because I have an expanded memory or am using a MIO, but whatever the reason, I could not get that function to work. I even tried to use the translator disk(PP would not boot). The function did work on my 800, however.

Also several times I had to reboot as I could not get out of a function with the ESC key. The PP disk comes with the write notch uncovered. I suggest that the first thing that you do is to cover it. If you don't you will find yourself saving files to your program disk and this can lead to a disaster.

When all things were considered, I liked this program and would recommend it. As you can see from this page, it will get the job done.

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ZMAGAZINE'S

Z*NET

THE INTERNATIONAL ATARI NEWSLETTER

This Issue:

World of Atari Report

Atari in Panama

Z*Net NewsWire

Vidi-ST

June 1989 Vol. 1 No. 4

WORLD OF ATARI

by John Nagy

Disneyland is known world wide as a fantasy come to life. The WORLD OF ATARI show, held in the Disneyland Hotel (Anaheim California) on April 22 and 23 was just that to the nearly ten thousand attendees.

On a sales floor of 14,000 square feet, 160 booths of developers and vendors moved $512,000.00 of Atari hardware and software to eager Atarians (9,232 by the official statement this week). ST WORLD magazine owner and organizer of the WORLD OF ATARI Shows says that Atari, vendors, and shoppers were ecstatic, and that the success of the tour of shows is now assured. Rich will go to the Detroit area this month with a WORLD show June 24 and 25 that will actually be larger than the Disneyland show. From there, the WORLD TOUR will go to Seattle in August, San Jose in the fall, and perhaps back to Disneyland just before Christmas.

The attitude brought to the show by the developers was probably the single most important contributer to the success of the show. Many vendors planned to introduce new hardware and software at this show, and the list is amazing. See the World Of Atari Newswire elsewhere in this issue.

The World of Atari show was not without flaws, of course. As a pilot effort for what will hopefully become a continuous tour, it succeeded in drawing the right people in the right quantity. It was not a glitzy "COMDEX of ATARI" that some may have expected from the promotions. The booths were small, and while a number of vendors had classy professionally prepared backdrops (Michtron, Migraph, Antic/Start among them), there were as many casual and home-made displays. Even Atari had only a few tables, in a back corner, shared with both GEnie (with Sandy Wilson Sysoping from the floor) and ISD (the Calamus folks). I found there to be more retailers than I had expected, but the crowds loved it. The atmosphere was very similar to the best of the "normal" Atarifests, but attendance and sales showed the difference there.

Certainly the biggest flaw -a doosey- was not the doing of the World Of Atari. The "concert" scheduled for Saturday night, featuring Mike Pender (Moody Blues), Mic Fleetwood (Fleetwood Mac), and Jimmy Hotz, was, well, a flop. And the actual sale/show itself was INCREDIBLY hard to find on the sprawling Disneyland Hotel grounds. I walked through buildings and looked at "you are here" signs for 20 minutes, asking and being asked for directions all the way. More than one visitor expressed disgust with the situation, and one said "If I cant even find it, it means this is just another Tramiel bust!".

Crowds were so thick at some points that people simply waited outside for a break. I am glad the sales floor at the Detroit show will be at least 25% larger! The size of the Disnelyland show was actually reduced to make room for the MIDI CONCERT, co-sponsored by START magazine and KEYBOARD magazine in cooperation with ATARI and KWAI musical instruments.

Tickets were given away at some booths, and were also sold for $5 each all day Saturday. Billed as "BEYOND THE THRESHOLD, a musical tour of today's new technology, hosted by Mike Pender". What the way-under capacity crowd in fact got was a pep talk from Sam Tramiel who showed the STACY, then a long winded series of demos and explanations of how and why musicians are excited about ATARI. Don't get me wrong, this was all very encouraging and even interesting, but it was NOT A CONCERT. Rich Tsukiji's plans for future WORLD OF ATARI SHOWS do NOT include a repeat of the concert! ■

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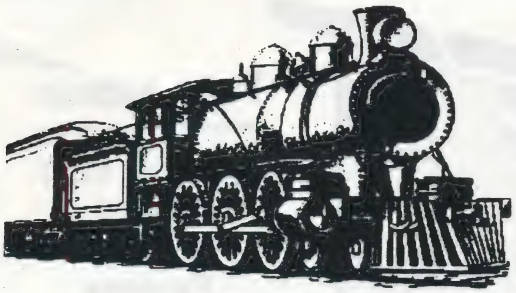

BUT DON'T MISS THE *WORLD OF ATARI* AT THE DEARBORN HYATT REGENCY

Come to the World of Atari show in Dearborn, Michigan to see just how far Atari has come. At the show, Gadgets by Small will be displaying the newest of the Macintosh emulators - Spectre GCR. And Avant-Garde will be showing pc-ditto II - the newest version of their IBM emulator that runs IBM software faster than an IBM!

Other developers will include Accusoft, Antic, Astra, Best Electronics, ICD, Intersect, Michtron, MiGraph, Seymor-Radix, SofTrek, and Supra Corp. There will be software seminars and Question and Answer sessions with executives from Atari Corp. Call this number to make your discount reservations today!

1-(800)-842-9034

The World of Atari show is produced by ST World magazine in cooperation with Atari Corporation.

JUNE 24 & 25

Atari isn't playing games anymore!

Z*NET NEWSWIRE

☞ In previous issues of Z*NET, we have listed Auto Mall Show dates being held in conjunction with Mitsubishi and Atari. Recently we discovered that Atari is not attending these shows, and that dealers and user groups are not involved in the tour. It appears that contract disagreements have resulted in Mitsubishi's preventing Atari dealers or representatives to cooperate in the displays. The tour is likely to continue along with the Atari equipment, but likely without anyone that can promote or demonstrate the computer. Atari is assuming a hands off stance at this point. If more develops you will hear it here.

☞ TENGEN Inc., a subsidiary of Atari Games Corp., has committed to the conversion of all Atari Games coin-op arcade titles into Atari ST commercial software. The first few titles are out now, and most of the arcade excitement was translated effectively. Tengen also filed a lawsuit on April 18, 1989, against Nintendo of America with infringing Tengen's exclusive copyrights in its new home video game, Tetris. According to the lawsuit, Tengen acquired worldwide exclusive rights to Tetris in May 1988 from Mirrorsoft. Atari Games is NOT affiliated with Atari Corporation, having been retained by Warner when the Tramiel's bought Atari Computers.

☞ The MACE Atarifest which ran May 6th and 7th in suburban Detroit is reported to have been a success. There were some minor problems with electricity the first day, but attendance was said to be well over 1,000, and sales were very good. Appearances by CODEHEAD, GRIBNIF, WORD PERFECT, and many retailers made up for no-shows of DIAMOND, TOTAL CONTROL (GOE), BEST, MIGRAPH and others promised by the early promotions. User groups attending booths outside the sales floor were annoyed and surprised to have to pay admission. One group, CHAOS of Lansing, MI, was swamped by excited viewers of the VIDI-ST demos. (See related review in this Z*Net, and a full review of the MACE show in ZMAG and ST*ZMAG.)

☞ The Summer CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW is scheduled for June 15th in Chicago. Atari is expected to be on hand for this modern toyland affair where dealers are wooed for the year's sales and distribution. Although it is likely to be fun, with games, entertainment, and such as the focus, not many new titles and no new products will likely be introduced by Atari.

☞ Happy Computers has sued Gadgets By Small. The suit, filed in late April, is for alleged defamation by David Small of Gadgets and their products. The statements were made on several national telecommunication services, and this is apparently the first time such a suit has been filed based on computer messages. Happy Computer is the maker of the Discovery cartridge and other Atari peripherals for the 8-bit systems. Gadgets makes the Spectre 128 and GCR Mac emulators for the ST. Small's attorneys claim the suit is without merit and a countersuit is being considered.

☞ The Software Publishers Association nominated Bill Atkinson (Hypercard developer), Dan Bricklin (Co-creator of VisiCalc), Bill Gates (Co-founder of Microsoft), Steve Jobs (Co-founder of Apple Computer), Steve Wozniak (Co-founder of Apple) as candidates for their Life Contribution Award. The group has made outstanding contributions to the growth of the PC industry and a winner will be selected by the SPA.

☞ The next World of Atari is coming to Dearborn, Michigan, June 24 - 25, 1989 at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn in suburban Detroit. Call (800) 842-9034 to make Hotel and Airline Reservations and receive free admission tickets with discount airfare and accomodations. (Round trip fare from Chicago, for instance, as low as $38.) Call 503-673-2259 for show details. The Detroit show will have a 50% larger sales floor than the Disneyland show. Atari Corporation will have many representatives and a large booth at the show. Most products and developers shown at the Disneyland World of Atari show will also be at the Dearborn event, plus 15 new developers. (See related stories in this Z*Net).

☞ June 30 was announced as the intended "drop dead date" for the FEDERATED chain of Atari owned stores that were moved to "discontinued" status January 1. That means that some kind of sale or spinoff must be arranged by then. About 18 stores of the 60-some have been closed in moves to consolidate and prep the chain for sale.

☞ News from ICD Inc. is that the MIO BOX (Multi-Input-Output for the 8-bit Atari) is back in limited production. Both the 256K and one meg versions will be available on a limited basis now that RAM prices have dropped. Ask your dealer or contact ICD directly. ICD, (815) 968-2228.

☞ The MIO may have competition soon. Bob Puff and Computer Software Services announced an upcoming product called the BLACK BOX. Bob is well known in the Atari community for his public domain works DISKCOM and SUPER ARC. The Black Box will do much of what the MIO does without the expensive RAM, to be released "summer '89", it will retail at $169.95, or $199.95 with 64K of printer buffer built in. Too early in the game to give any more info... yet. Stay tuned! Bob also released BOBTERM, a powerful shareware terminal program that many say is superior to anything for the 8-bit Atari. Look for it online at the major services and in your club library.

☞ Reeve Software has DIAMOND WRITE about ready for the door, to support the 8-bit Atari DIAMOND operating system. The competition, GOE from Total Control Systems, still has not been released. TCS has not returned phone calls or participated in online product discussions for some time.

☞ PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS is making an offer to user groups that give every one of their products to any group that will review them in their newsletter! All that is needed is a $25 registration fee and the first item the group would like to review will be sent. After a copy of the group newsletter with a review of the item is sent back to Practical Solutions, the next item may be requested at no charge... and so on. PS makes the VideoKey (reviewed here last month!), the Monitor Master, Mouse Master, Drive Master, Tweety Board, and more. Z*Net encourages your club to take advantage of this offer! Practical Solutions, 1135 North Jones Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716, (602) 332-6100. ■

WORLD OF ATARI NEWSWIRE

by John Nagy

The following is a report on the NEW products and highlights of some of the others. There was so much happening we are providing the most interesting.

<*> ATARI CORP showed their desktop publishing system, DESKSET II, although did not have a firm release date. Also showing was the remarkable hybrid word-processor/spreadsheet/database/publisher package "Word-flair", which will sell at $149 retail when released shortly. The booth also featured the STACY laptop ST for part of Sunday.

<*> ARTISTECH premiered DA VINCI, billed as the "ultimate graphic tool" for art, animation, and printing. It looked quite powerful, certainly rivaling the CYBERPAINT package. The developers claim that DA VINCI is more versatile, powerful, and yet easier to use. $99.95, to be available July 31st. ArtisTech, (916) 488-6844.

<*> AVANT-GARDE gave us the first look at their new PC DITTO II, a hardware addition to be installed INSIDE your ST or MEGA machine. For $299 you can have very complete IBM XT compatibility and triple the speed. No, you won't be using this on the Stacy -yet anyway. Registered owners of the software PC-DITTO can get $150 off. Release is still 6-8 weeks away. (904) 221-2904.

<*> CODEHEAD, the G+PLUS and MULTIDESK folks, introduced MIDIMAX, a professional real-time music performance aid. It can operate as a program or accessory, redirect any MIDI instructions, remap and make macros, create modal harmonies from single keys, and lots more that I don't even begin to follow. You can for $49.95. HOTWIRE, a desktop alternative for speedy access to almost anything was also drawing a lot of attention, new at $39.95. (213) 386-5735.

<*> COMPUTER GAMES PLUS has a national reputation as a great source for import games and software. Owner Art Turko wowed the show with his VIDEO IMAGE DIGITAL INTERFACE, VIDI-ST, imported on an exclusive marketing agreement from Scotland. This is BRAND NEW and HOT folks! This unit beats all other video samplers I have seen under $1,200.00. It is $199.95 only from Computer Games Plus. Art should sell a million. (714) 639-8189.

<*> FAST TECHNOLOGIES showed two models of a "TURBO 16" accelerator board for the ST. At $399 and $499, they allow 16mhz operation of the ST, double that of normal. They include a 32K RAM cache that allows use with slower RAM chips. The more expensive unit will work on all machines including the STACY, and will work with PC-DITTO and SPECTRE.

<*> GADGETS BY SMALL had Dave and Sandy Small hoping to show the throngs of admirers their new GCR. This still developing device will replace the popular SPECTRE 128 MACINTOSH emulator for those who wish a "plug and play" MAC in their ST. The GCR does what the Spectre does, PLUS allows realtime access to MAC disks with no translation needed. Dave expects a summer release date- with any luck at all. The FCC is type-approving it now, so GADGETS is using the interim to GAMMA-TEST and make whatever improvements their testers can come up with. It appears that adjustments will be on board that will allow users to "touch up" problem disk drives to be reliable under the demands of MAC emulation. It will be $299.95, with a healthy rebate for those who upgrade from Spectres. Dave's newsletter are entertaining enough to be worth the cost alone. (303) 791-6098.

<*> IMAGEN introduced ULTRASCRIPT for DOT MATRIX owners at the World of Atari show. I was AMAZED at the quality. It requires at least 2 meg of RAM, however. Both 9 and 24 pin printers (Epson compatible) are supported, and the output is virtually indistinguishable from that of a laser printer after Xeroxing the output. It was on special price at the show for under $200 but sells for $229 normally. (408) 986-9400.

<*> JRI, John Russel Innovations, introduced two new innovations at the show- the JATO accelerator board at the remarkable price of $99.95 and the ST4096C color enhancement system for $49.95. The JATO will double the processing speed of most computations inside the ST or MEGA machines. Some machines with RAM chips rated slower than 120 NS may not tolerate the speed, but these should be a minority. A new 68000 chip is included, along with a hardware switch to cut back to normal speed when needed (like in games!). The JATO is a solder installation, as the CPU must be removed and a socket installed. The ST4096C installs much more readily and gives 64 colors at one time, and ups the palette of the ST from 512 to 4,096 colors. It requires a shifter chip from Atari, and I have no idea of the cost of it. These are the folks that gave us GENLOCK, which was demostrated both on the floor and at the MIDI presentation. It is everything a chroma-key system should be, plus allows interfacing with professional video gear. Pricey at $650, it installs only in the MEGA machines of discriminating video movers and shakers. (415) 458-9577.

<*> MICHTRON/MICRODEAL had an outstanding display, and featured the first copies of ST TUNE-UP available anywhere. Delayed due to torturous testing, it is a top notch hard drive maintenance tool. TALESPIN was also at last available, a graphic adventure game creator. George Miller told me he had scored a major coup the day of the show- he had secured exclusive rights to IMAGEN's Ultrascript. No other DTP package but FLEET STREET will be able to be sold bundled with the remarkable Postscript emulator. FLEET STREET v 3 should also do the fancy things that seem to be selling the higher price DTP systems, and should be available this Fall. (313) 334-5700.

<*> MIGRAPH, one of my favorite companies, products, and people, showed their soon to be released hand scanner and new TOUCH UP software. Touch UP is being revised into a simpler, cheaper package as well as a new more advanced system. The scanner will be available with TOUCH UP LITE for $499. Migraph is offering an introductory price of $429 on the bundle through July 31. Registered Touch-Up owners can purchase the hand scanner direct from Migraph for only $299. Contact Liz and Kevin Mitchell at (800) 223-3729.

<*> REEVE SOFTWARE had his DIAMOND desktop system for the 8-bit Atari, plus his well known NEWS STATION and otehr software on display. DIAMOND WRITE is almost ready, and several applications should be coming soon for this very competent "GEM for the 8 Bit" cart.

<*> SEYMOR/RADIX was taking orders for their brand new DVT device, a cart which plugs into a VCR to make hard drive backups. It stores at the rate of a megabyte a minute and retails for $249.95. ■

SIG HARTMANN AT THE WORLD OF ATARI SHOW

by John Nagy

A highlight of the Disneyland Hotel WORLD OF ATARI SHOW (April 22-23) was a seminar with Sig Hartmann, Atari Vice President, along with Mike Dendo, Vice President of Sales, and Joe Mendolia, Vice President of Marketing. Despite the "CORONADO ROOM" being what seemed like an unmarked mile from the World sales floor, through halls, around buildings, and down stairs, an over capacity crowd of more than 300 attended. Sig was surprised at the interest in what he had to say, and said that Sam would be pleased to know so many people supported Atari. In fact, had the meeting been held next door to the sales floor, I am certain that the attendance would have been tripled.

Sig Hartmann is a distinguished and youngish older man. His full head of grey hair and heavy German accent lend authority to his every word, and he makes you believe everything he says. And yes, you BELIEVE IT. I feel quite sure that Sig would not lie to anyone... and if he ever did, we wouldn't know it. A more ideal sales leader cannot be imagined. Sig opened his talk after waiting for a microphone - they actually expected a small enough turnout to not need one.

He began by reciting the recent history of Atari, including the decision last year to sacrifice the U.S. market to hold on to the European leadership. Insufficient RAM chips were blamed for lack of product. Atari felt that they had enough product to push in Europe (where higher prices were also possible) to establish Atari as a standard, but not enough to make a change in the domestic market. He conceded that the US dealers, developers, and users suffered for this decision.

The new products (STACY, PORTFOLIO, etc) were discussed, and the 68030 UNIX/TOS machine was mentioned as being planned for the end of 1989. Sig cut that part of the discussion short, citing a new policy, per Sam Tramiel, of not announcing or detailing "anything unless we can have for sale in 60 days" will significantly reduce the "vaporware" image of Atari.

"Atari could have become a standard in the US last year if we had enough product. We did it in Europe, and we will have to work twice as hard to come back this year, but we will do it in the USA. This is the year for the USA", said Sig to sustained applause. Distribution, marketing, sales, and availability were mentioned as the keys.

Moving into the Sales seat at Atari, Sig will be specifically in charge of corporate, OEM, and government/ institutional sales. He mentioned that a corporate sales success cannot occur without network systems, and that Atari was working on several. The BIODATA Ethernet system was mentioned, but Sig said it was a little too expensive. He pointed out the virtues of desktop publishing systems below the price of a single component of other systems and described an "EXCEL-like" powerful spreadsheet that he was "only about a year past due" on turning out. Coming Atari software, the Postscript emulator ULTRASCRIPT, and other advances in ST software (exhibited with almost excessive outpourings at the World of Atari show!) all were cited as proof of Atari's power and resurgence.

User group support is most certainly wanted by Atari, and Sig says the most important thing Atari can do for user groups is to succeed as a computer company. He said that sales of the size they expect this year could as much as triple the numbers of users in groups. Sig mentioned that there had been three user group newsletters sent out since last fall, and that if groups had not gotten them, they should contact Atari to verify their registrations.

Joe Mendolia, the new guy that came over from IMAGEN to handle Atari Marketing, will inherit User Group Support as part of his division. He will pick the replacement for Cindy Claveran, who left the User Group Coordinator position after less than a year there (he is still taking resume's!). Although generally quiet during the seminar, Joe is approachable and genuinely interested in resolving the snafus that Atari marketing has been famous for. He welcomed input regarding bad dealers and ideas for change.

Mike Dendo is young and all business. As Vice President of Sales, it is his job to manage the distribution systems for Atari products.

The CD ROM device was asked about, and it was confirmed that it was held back for so long due to the commitment not to release it until it could be sold for $500. It is finally possible to place it at $599 retail, so the project is moving ahead.

Scheduling of domestic releases was confirmed to be intended "from now on" to be AHEAD of overseas. "Europe can't even have the Stacy for display now". Sig projected that "60, 70 thousand units" of the Portfolio would be shipping each month by this fall.

Federated status was questioned. Mike said that Atari was "basically looking at a June 30 drop-dead date" on Federated, meaning that they intend for it to be sold or "something" by then and no longer a concern of Atari. Sig said that it seemed like a good thing, but after trying it, Atari decided to go back to what it knew, being a technology leader and producing the best products at the best prices. Federated has lately closed 13 more of its stores, leaving 43 in the Southwest. Internal word remains that Greg Pratt, President of the Federated division at Atari, is still fighting to buy the chain from within. As to whether Federated (in whatever incarnation it has after the split with Atari) will continue to sell Atari products, Mike said "that's a real good question..." and recommended that the questioner take it out to Wayne Smith, Southern California Regional Sales Manager. Sig said, sure, it is a retail chain, and they will sell anything that sells well.

Atari 8-bit users finally raised their voices and asked where they fit in all this ST and new product talk. Sig stressed earnestly that he and Sam had both agreed that 8-bit support would continue. Whatever that means. He did say that it was extremely difficult to get developers interested in making new software for anything but new machines, but that he held hope for the DIAMOND package (by REEVE SOFTWARE) in sparking new attention. He said that Atari was very interested in the cart that simulates the operations of an ST in a mouse and window environment. A bundle of hardware and software using DIAMOND will be promoted as soon as more basic applications are completed and tested. "We want it to be good because we will stand behind it."

TOS 1.4 and the Blitter were quizzed about. Tos 1.4 is currently in all new production MEGA machines, as is the Blitter. When existing supplies of the older TOS ROMs are exhausted, 1.4 will be in all ST machines.

The crowd broke up, generally happy to have heard some solid dialog and reasons for optimism. If Atari holds their course and can produce what they are planning, 1989 will indeed be the year of ATARI. ■

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BEYOND GEM!

Paying Attention to Events (Part 1)

by Douglas Hodson

It's easy to ignore system generated events. It is also a poor practice to do so. When I started programming the ST, I kept skipping the sections on event handling. It just seemed like too much work. The appearance of my programming efforts suffered as a result. This article is dedicated exclusively to the event functions GEM provides.

* What Is An Event? *

Double clicking the mouse button, typing on the keyboard, selecting an item from the menu bar, resizing a window, waiting for 10 milliseconds to pass, these are all events. Just about every "action" that the user invokes during his or her interaction with the computer, generates an event.

Events come in several flavors: button, keyboard, message, mouse and timer. Each event has a corresponding routine that can detect it's presence.

evnt_button() - this event "detect" function tells GEM you want to be notified when specific mouse buttons are clicked.

evnt_keybd() - this function awaits a keyboard event, meaning it waits for the user to press a key on the keyboard.

evnt_mesag() - this function awaits a message. A message can be one of several things. Clicking a selection in the menu bar generates a message event. Resizing a window, closing a window, moving a window, moving window sliders, etc... all generate message events.

evnt_mouse() - this function awaits the mouse to enter a specified rectangle. The rectangle coordinates are an input to this function and the event is generated when the mouse pointer crosses the rectangle's boundary (entering or exiting the box).

evnt_timer() - this function waits for a given time to pass. The length of time is given as one of the inputs. Be warned, I've read information indicating system crashes if used within a desk accessory!

As you can see, GEM provides the programmer with several tools to detect different kinds of events. It must also be pointed out that the events just listed detect one and only one type of event, that's it.

* The Grandaddy Event Call *

GEM provides a much more powerful event detection function which is a combination of all the above. The function is called evnt_multi() and is the grandaddy event function of them all. Evnt_multi() allows you to "OR" several event types of interest, and input it into the function call, thereby allowing detection of several possible events. After evnt_multi() is exited (i.e. an event happened), the information passed back to you contains the type of event that occurred and other related information.

The event types or "masks" that are ORed together as input to evnt_multi() are listed below. Also a short example of how to OR these masks together follows.

```
#define MU_KEYBD 0x0001
#define MU_BUTTON 0x0002
#define MU_M1 0x0004
#define MU_M2 0x0008
#define MU_MESAG 0x0010
#define MU_TIMER 0x0020
    int events;
/* typical example of specifying event types */
event_types = MU_KEYBD | MU_MESAG | MU_TIMER;
```

The "event_types" variable is used as input to evnt_multi(). Of course evnt_multi() needs much more information than that. Where's the function prototype.

```
evnt_multi(
event_types, /* event types */
clicks, button, state, /* mouse button info */
m1_in_out, x1, y1, w1, h1, /* 1st rectangle info */
m2_in_out, x2, y2, w2, h2, /* 2nd rectangle info*/
buffer, /* message buffer addr */
lowtime, hightime, /* timer info */
xptr, yptr, /* mouse coordinates */
bptr, /* mouse button state */
kptr, /* keyboard state */
key, /* key code info */
times); /* times mouse state occurred */
```

* Confused? *

Looks a little overwhelming doesn't it? My first reaction to all these variables was, "Which ones are important?". Sorry to say, the answer is not cut and dried, it's based upon the event types specified with "event_types". A clear explanation of all the evnt_multi() variables is required for proper usage of the function. Since button events are the hardest to understand, we will limit our discussion to this type of event in this issue (also space limitations). The rest of the events will be covered in the next issue.

"Clicks", "button" and "state" variables are all related to the MU_BUTTON (mouse button) event type. A mouse event occurs when the keys of interest, defined by "button" are placed in a state defined by "state", for a count of "clicks" in a time generally specified by the panel (this came straight out of the Laser C manual). I'm sure it's about as clear as mud, right? Let's try again.

The "button" variable is a mask indicating which mouse button to pay attention to. If "button" equals one then left button is "activated", if the "button" is two then right button is active. The "state" variable indicates whether we are looking for the button event to occur when the button is up or down. Zero indicates up, one indicates down. The last variable is "clicks". It's simply the maximum number of mouse button clicks to look for, typically one or two. Typical numbers for "clicks", "button" and "state" are all integer ones. With these numbers, a button event will occur when the left mouse button is pressed once (event will trigger when left button goes into down position). If you want to detect double clicks, then "clicks" should be set to two.

There are two other variables related to mouse events, "bptr" and "times". Both "bptr" and "times" are integer pointers, indicating they will contain information (after evnt_multi() terminates) regarding the state and conditions that occurred to the mouse button(s) while evnt_multi() was processing. "bptr" contains the state at which the mouse button was in when evnt_multi() terminated (i.e. up or down). (Note: this is only true for single click events) Now you know how paint programs perform drag operations, test "bptr"! The "times" variable will contain the number of times the mouse button entered the desired state, specified by "state".

At first it may seem that "times" will always equal "clicks". Not necessarily, if "clicks" equals two (so you can detect double clicks) and the user clicks once, a button event is STILL generated! This is because "clicks" does not tell GEM the number of clicks required to generate an event, but rather the MAXIMUM number of clicks you want GEM to

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

THE CLUB ROOM - Atari in Panama

by Carlos Hassan - Panama Canal Atari Computer Users Group

*[EDITOR'S NOTE: With the recent problems with elections, unrest, even troop movements into Panama, it may be a while before Atarians there have time to focus on their computers. We received this article just before things heated up in Panama, from one of our newest Z*Net member groups. We hope to have more international perspective contributions in the CLUB ROOM. Z*Net also encourages groups to submit a CLUB ROOM about any unique or successful project or operation that other groups could learn from.]*

Atari computers in Panama go back a long time. I was only eleven when I first began playing with an ATARI 400 computer in 1981. Back in those happy times, we did not even have program recorders. Rather, all the programs were available as cartridges, which the local store was happy to provide at over $50.00 each.

As soon as the popularity of this machine spread, cassette program recorders and disk drives were made available. I bought my own ATARI computer, the A-800 model, in 1982, after a year of going over to my neighbor's house to "play Atari". My own computer cost $420.00. I recall selling it years later for $60.00, and I got a good deal. At the time I did not know any English, but I learned little by little, enough to play around with the BASIC listings in the users' manual. Then I heard there was this "fantastic" Atari club, in what was formerly the Panama Canal Zone. I went to their meetings, and was fascinated by the hardware and software demonstrated there. The only catch to my involvement was everyone speaking, reading, and meeting in English!

The club started out back in 1981 when Department Of Defense personnel stationed in Panama bought Atari computers and decided to do something with them. The club started with only 12 members, but it grew at a fantastic rate, having at one time over 400 members. There were so many of them, that the club began dropping memberships because their Synfile records simply could not handle them!

PCACUG, or Panama Canal Atari Computer Users' Group, soon established a Bulletin Board system (1983), and had been already delivering Pan*ATARI*News for at least a year and a half.

The club started as an English-only club, mainly because all of the members back then were American citizens. Little by little, the Panamanian members grew too. Although most of the volunteer jobs were carried out by Americans, soon Panamanians took over some of them. It was just two years ago that a Panamanian finally became president of the club, and a completely bilingual meeting was carried out. Formerly, only a few articles here and there would be included in Spanish in our monthly newsletter, the Pan*Atari*News.

Last year I was elected president of the club. How did I get in there? Well, maybe there weren't many people attending that particular election meeting! One of my first goals was making a monthly newsletter going out to all the members, and enhancing club participation, but then, isn't that every president's goal? We began work on our newsletter, Pan*Atari*News.

P*A*N is a 24 page monthly job. I began, like every other newsletter editor (did I tell you that I also am in charge of that?), to reprint articles from other newsletters and online sources. We translated many articles to Spanish, and put them inside the newsletter, finally making it a 50/50 bilingual newsletter. But, as every other editor reading this knows, soon we ran out of things to print (or reprint!), and club participation in writing articles is almost non-existent. Then I read a press release concerning Z*Net. Sooner than I knew, Z*Net was delivering us its fantastic 12 page insert which now covers half the work we have to do! As a result of Z*Net's 16bit coverage, our 8bit-only club is teaming the newsletter effort with the local ST club.

Being in a bilingual country poses some interesting pronunciation problems. Did you ever give it any thought as to how you would pronounce "disk drive" in another language? Or "diskette" or "cursor" or "monitor"?

There is a large Atari 8-bit user base here in our country, due to the promotional effort of the company which brought, and sold, thousands of Atari computers to Panama. The problem, as I am sure has happened in the US and other countries as well, is that the company was not a computer store. It was an electronics store, happy to sell computers as if they were just home appliances (Sound familiar?).

We are making a big effort to get all these 8bit users into our club. Sometimes they don't even know we exist, or think we only speak English. As this article is sent to Z*Net, preparations are underway for our second annual Atari Software Fair. At our Fair, probably a lot different than the ones at the States, since we don't have third party developers showing off products, etc., we present the latest 8-bit software, both commercial and Public Domain. We invite computer companies to bring generic computer products that 8-bit users can buy, and we also get a lot of new memberships.

If you would like any information about our club, or start a newsletter exchange, just write to us at: PCACUG, Apartado 5265, Balboa, Ancon, Panama, Republica de Panama. ■

BEYOND GEM Continued from page Z*7

monitor. I'm sure the next question is "If an event is triggered after one mouse click, how does my program detect double clicks?".

GEM monitors the mouse clicks in conjunction with a countdown timer. The process works as follows. User clicks mouse button, timer starts counting down (length of time will be discussed in a moment), if user clicks again before timer expires then double click happened and "times" will equal two. If another click does not occur before timer expires then "times" will equal one. Basically a mouse event is generated after a click happens and timer expires! "times" simply represents the number of clicks that occurred in the countdown timer period plus the initial click.

The length of time for the countdown timer can be adjusted. I'm sure all of us has adjusted it at one time or another using the Control Panel. The timer values range from 0 through 4. Go back and play with the Control Panel timer values and click on the key click sound control button. This will give you a good feel for when button events are actually generated. You can also adjust the timer value by using evnt_dclick(). It is not a good practice to change timer values without the user actually initiating the change. It can, and probably will destroy the users hand/eye coordination. Until next month, Doug. ■

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VIDI-ST VIDEO DIGITIZER REAL TIME FRAME GRABBER

Z*NET was the first to tell you about this amazing product, and now the VIDI-ST from Scotland is available in the USA. Distributed by COMPUTER GAMES PLUS in

California, the VIDI-ST is a real-time frame grabber for use with any composite video source. What that means is that any VCR, camera, even some TV sets can be used as a signal source for instant digital pictures on any Atari ST computer. Unlike other digitizers that can take long scan times, VIDI-ST does not require a motionless subject. You can collect frames at a speed up to about four per second, and play them back as an animation! Intake and display speeds are independently controlled in the software, and up to 125 frames (on a MEGA 4, 25 on a 1040, 7 on a 520) can be stored, played back, individually selected from a 16-screen-at-a-time selection display, and manipulated.

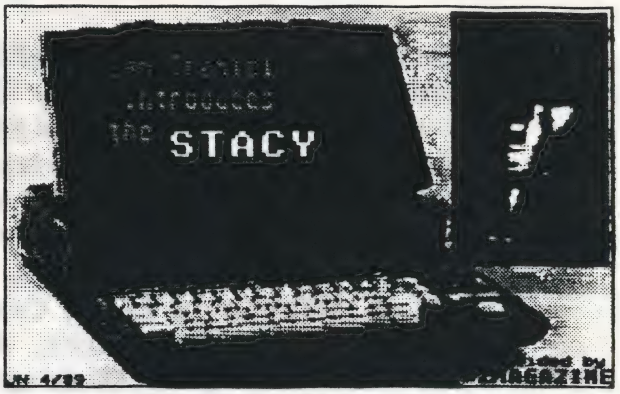
The unit is a black cartridge about the size of a disk box, with a single contrast control protruding from the side next to a phono plug that is the video input. Recessed controls adjust brightness range and horizontal scan rate. Operation is remarkably simple. Any composite source can be sampled instantly.

The software with the VIDI-ST resembles CYBER-PAINT in layout and sophisticated power. Alternative palettes can be selected, flavoring the 16-shade monochrome

translation of the input in any way you choose. Advanced cut/paste and clipboard functions allow remarkable edit functions. A window can also be opened in an exiting picture, and new moving input can be sampled inside. NEOCHROME and DEGAS format files can be loaded and merged with live video, and the results saved in either format as well, and can be manipulated or titled in other art programs. The sequence of frames can even be saved individually and loaded into Cyberpaint to create and save an animation. A print function is also supplied. The company, ROMBO of Scotland, is doing continuous development and upgrades to the software as well.

The quality of pictures is quite good, and when displayed on a TV, fools some viewers into thinking they are looking at direct live video instead of digital output from a computer. Monochrome operation is also available, but some functions are not as complete. Sampling rate is decreased somewhat by the dither process required to make MONO half-tone images.

Applications of the VIDI-ST are many. The rapid sampling is a breakthrough in digitizers for the ST, allowing you to collect a sequence of frames and then selecting exactly the one where the action (yes, ACTION!) is exactly what you want. No super freeze-frame is required on your VCR, in fact you can collect frames live and review them later. Quality is



sufficient for use in newsletters by importing the pictures into any DTP system. ST*ZMAG used the VIDI-ST for the pictures of the World of Atari Show it posted on national telecom services. Excited viewers of the system, shown only at the Disneyland and MACE shows (and the upcoming Detroit WORLD show) came up with intriguing ideas as well, including making backgrounds for TV slides on cable TV, and "pencil tests" of hand drawn animations. Normal pencil tests are shot on film and production at the art house must wait days until the test can be viewed. Using VIDI-ST, it can take minutes and have no processing charges! Another use will be to collect screen shots of 8-bit software for newslwetters via the Atari XL/XE composite output.

VIDI-ST is more fun than humans are normally allowed to have! The grins-per-buck ratio outdoes all other hardware and software we have seen in years. VIDI-ST retails in the US for $199.95, but Z*NET and ST*ZMAG are able to offer a $50 savings ONLY THROUGH JUNE 31, 1989. Call COMPUTER GAMES PLUS at 800-443-8189 or 714-639-8189 and mention this offer from Z*NET (you MUST say Z*NET) and you can then order the VIDI-ST for only $149.95 (Visa/Mastercard OK). Order soon, as this item will be one of the hottest items of the year, and save $50 by mentioning Z*NET. ■

PUBLIC DOMAIN REPORT

by Alice Amore

HotWire!

An important benefit of public domain/shareware software is the ability it gives us to "preview" new commercial software releases via demos and press releases. Although a demo doesn't let us see everything, it does let us get the a feel for the program's features and user-friendliness.

HotWire!, by Charles F. Johnson and John Eidsvoog, is a new program from CodeHead Software, and a demo version is available. HotWire! is sort of a "command center" which uses hotkeys to run programs. Simply put, a hotkey is a key which has been preprogrammed (by you) with a set of instructions for your computer to follow. For instance, you can tell HotWire! to run your word processor every time you hit "W", or to run Interlink whenever you hit "I". The runnable file can be anywhere, even several folder-layers deep. You can hit a hotkey at the desktop level or from the HotWire! menu. If you use the menu, you can also enable programs by clicking on icons.

The HotWire! menu displays up to 54 file names and also has room for a 20-character description per file. Additional file menus are possible. It works on hard drives or floppies, and is compatible with CodeHead's MultiDesk. It uses only 40K of memory, and is written in assembly language.

Although the demo version doesn't let you do much, it does give you a clear picture of HotWire!'s capabilities.

DISK LETTER

DISK LETTER isn't a new concept, but it goes farther (and does it better) than any similar effort to date. DISK LETTER is a "magazine on a disk". Using the GEM interface to make selections, text files can be read, picture files can be viewed, sound files can be heard, and games can be played. It's as easy as clicking on the selection from the pull-down menus.

DISK LETTER handles REPLAY sound files, compressed PI1 D.E.G.A.S pictures (including color cycling), a text reader program with print option, and an auto-load function for loading either DISK LETTER or other programs. You create your own DISK LETTER by writing simple ASCII files telling the program where to locate your files. Also, you can create a special file which will automatically run a concurrent picture/sound file at boot-up. DISK LETTER can be especially useful if you are in charge of assembling disks of new programs for your user group. It can be run from drive A only, and was written by John Hickey as shareware.

A sample newsletter (SAMPLEDL.ARC) is available and strongly recommended. It will give you a good idea of DISK LETTER's possibilities.

QUICK INDEX 1.0

QUICK INDEX is a program which evaluates several of the ST's functions. Keeping tabs on your ST's performance under a variety of conditions (such as different TOS versions and other speeder-uppers) can help you make decisions about how to configure your set-up for optimum performance.

Five "benchmarks" can be measured in terms of speed: ~ CPU ~ VT52 text output ~ GEM dialog boxes ~ GEMDOS file creation ~ Raw disk DMA sector I/O

Results are measured in percentiles which makes it easy to compare varying configurations. QUICK INDEX is sixth in the excellent series of QUICK utilities (shareware) by Darek Mihocka and Ignac Kolenko. You can become a registered user of all the QUICK programs with one fee, and be eligible for updates.

MIDIDEMO

MIDIDEMO is a demo for MIDIMAX by Larry Herzberg for CodeHead Software. MIDIMAX is a sophisticated MIDI manager which, among other things, creates MIDI macros which can store preconfigurations containing your entire MIDI set-up. Also supported:

Convert continuous controllers; Use the ST as an intelligent thru-box; Create MIDICHORD files; Harmonic maps

CIRCLES & DEJA_VU

These demos are awe-inspiring. Seeing them kinda reminds me of those days of yore when SHINY BUBBLES hit the boards. Exciting STuff! These are .SEQ files created with Aegis Animator. You will need any of the ANIMATOR viewers to run them.

While we're picture-looking, check out ROCKERS, a collection of IMGSCAN pictures including Chuck Berry, Keith Richard, Stevie Nicks, and Frank Zappa.

COMPACT DIR

COMPACT DIR sends a hard drive directory to your printer, but it does it in the nicest of ways. For starters, it uses the smallest print possible. You might get a per-page listing of as much as 10 megs! COMPACT DIR supports the HP Deskjet and Epson compats. (I tested the program on my NX-1000 and it worked perfectly the first time.) A finished page is packed with information including the partition, report date, page number, and volume name. Directories are listed with their paths intact, and each file within a directory is accompanied by its byte count and time stamp. You can turn off the paging feature to save even more paper. The program can also send a dump from drives A and B. COMPACT DIR is shareware from Chet Walters. ■

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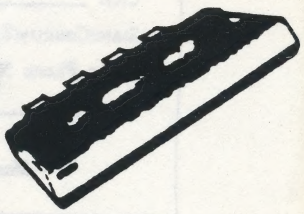

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